

12.

THE
HOPE
OF
THE HYPOCRITE,
DESCRIBED FROM
THE SCRIPTURES.

*Be not deceived; GOD is not mocked: for whatsoever a
man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

SECOND EDITION.

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THE HOPE, &c.

THE Scriptures of Truth speak of the hope of the Hypocrite, as well as of the hope of the Righteous. From hence it is clear, that people may be pretty confident of the safety of their eternal state, while there is the greatest danger; and that it behoves every one to examine themselves whether they be in the faith or not, or whether they may not be deceiving themselves. Reader, this little book is designed to give thee an opportunity of trying thy own case, and knowing thy own hope, whether it is a good or a bad one, and will leave thee without excuse when thou comest before the judgment-seat of Christ, if thou live and die a stranger to thy case, and of course a self-deceived sinner. It is a word of instruction, of council, and of love, which can do thee no harm, and may do thee much good, when the writer has no more an opportunity of addressing thee. Take it as a looking glass, in which to examine thy real character, and may God Almighty give his blessing to it with that view.

1. The hypocrite hopes for heaven, because he means to do no one any harm, while he lives in cursing and swearing, sabbath-breaking, drunkenness and whoring, lying and cheating, railing, and back-biting and slandering, filthy and unclean conversation, defaming and persecuting those that be good, and mocking at sin in those that are wicked; following with greediness and pleasure every evil word and work which suits his corrupt state, and gratifies his beastly inclinations and dispositions; apprehending there are many as ill as himself;

that if he be chargeable with some sins, he is no hypocrite; that there are none perfect, that he has some good qualifications which all have not, and that a visit to the church and sacrament now and then, or the performance of some other good action, will help to make amends for all, and put him upon as good a footing with his Maker as those who profess more religion than himself, and who, in his esteem, have not half so much honesty and sincerity. *Prov. xi. 9. Isa. ix. 17. xxx. 6. iv. Matt. xxiv. 51. 2 Tim. iii. 13. There is no fear of God before their eyes—deceiving, and being deceived.*

2. The hypocrite hopes for heaven, because he dislikes some atrocious and infamous sins in others, (such as swearing, murder, whoredom, theft, lying, cheating, &c.) and because from fear, shame, scandal, reproach, or other inconvenience, he disallows and avoids them himself; while, at the same time, he can break the sabbath to forward business, to reap gain, to oblige his friends, or to amuse and entertain his mind; while also he can take the name of God in vain upon every trifling occasion, can propagate evil reports against his neighbour with sensations of pleasure, (especially if he be a professor) can now and then deceive and over-reach to serve an advantageous purpose, and resent an injury with rancour and malice; and yet persuade himself, that in these things there is little or no harm, altho' the wrath of God is said to be revealed from heaven against them. *Luke xviii. 11. Matt. v. 20. Psalm cxix. Rom. i. 18. Eph. v. 6. Matt. xxiii. Woe unto you—Hypocrites! For ye make clean the out-side, and appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of iniquity.*

3. The hypocrite hopes for heaven, because he fancies he has a good heart; because he says his prayers, gives alms, goes to worship when it suits him, (not otherwise); because he has kept to the religion in which he was brought up; because he pays every one the same, does nobody any harm (except when provoked

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it), and observes many other duties which some of his neighbours choose to neglect: while, at the same time, he does nothing from the true fear of God, or a real love to the will of Christ; from a desire to serve his interest and cause, or a wish to glorify his name; while also he seeks the praise, and fears the reproach of men; and will go no further in his works of righteousness than will consist with these; and while, too, he can give way to evil tempers, and follow the will and amusements of the flesh, and the foolish fashions and vanities of the world, which are as strictly forbidden in the word of God as outward vices; and while he can overlook numberless offices of love, faith, humility, self-denial, gentleness, kindness, goodness and truth, which are as much enjoined therein as the few easy duties he finds it convenient occasionally to observe. *John xii. 43. Mark vi. 20. Col. iii. 17. Eph. iv. 22, 23. Matt. xxiii. 23. Woe unto you, hypocrites—these things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*

4. The hypocrite hopes for heaven because he imagines his sins are few, little, and common, and that God is too merciful to punish any offenders but those who are audaciously vile and wicked. He hopes for heaven also, because he supposes very few are lost, and the much greater part of mankind saved, and because if such as himself perish for ever, what is to become of thousands much worse? Thus his hope rests upon the wickedness of others, and upon the comparative goodness of himself; whilst he misrepresents the God of truth and righteousness, and contradicts his holy word to support his vain and foolish confidence. *Jer. ii. 35, 37. Matt. vii. 13, 14. John ix. 40, 41. Psalm xxxvi. 2. He (viz. the hypocrite) flattereth himself in his own eyes until his iniquity be found to be hateful.*

5. The hypocrite hopes for heaven because he loves Christ, while he refuseth to renounce one sinful plea-

sure, or evil custom, or unscriptural practice at his command, from which he derives pleasure or profit; will not deny himself one sensual gratification, nor venture any thing for him, in obedience to his word, either of property, interest or reputation, and blames those who do; while also he carefully avoids the least degree of reproach and suffering for his sake, and counsels others to do the same; thus manifesting that he loves himself and worldly advantage before his Saviour, while he acknowledges that it was purely by his willingness to endure sufferings for us that he shewed his love to us, and while he consents to the truth of his own observations, *If a man love me, he will keep my words; and if any man will come after me, and so evidence his love and attachment to me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* John xiv. 23. Matt. xvi. 24. Luke xvi. 26, 27.

6. The hypocrite hopes for heaven because he has renounced some bad practices, and adopted some good ones; because he gives the preference to gospel preaching, and can distinguish some leading truths thereof which many of his neighbours are unacquainted with, and because he maintains a zealous attachment to them and cannot relish a sermon or book without them; while there are other truths equally necessary and important which he overlooks, undervalues, and rejects; and while those he professes to have received, have no visible influence to conquer the evils of his heart, or to adorn and beautify the deportment of his life, and leave him as dead to God and real goodness as the rest of formal professors; while, indeed, there is nothing to distinguish him from the most ignorant about him, but a change of place of worship, and an alteration in his religious sentiments, together with an intemperate zeal for a few favourite doctrines, and a partial regularity of conduct, in which he may be excelled by multitudes whom he affects to despise as blind self-righteous Pharisees.

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risees. *Tit. i. 19.* They (*viz. hypocrites*) profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being disobedient. *Rom. ii. 17. 21.* Behold thou makest thy boast of God and knowest his will, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, an instructor of the foolish, which hast a FORM of knowledge, and of the truth. Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?

7. The hypocrite hopes for heaven in the way of negligence and sloth. He has many excuses to plead, from his business, family, and other temporal concerns, for the neglect of prayer and other means of grace, (while the real truth is, that he wants a heart to love and value them as he does the things of this life) and vainly fancies his hypocritical excuses will avail with God for his forgiveness, if he should die soon; and, should he live long, he hopes to apply more diligently for the salvation of his soul, when he has more leisure; and thus perverts and despises our blessed Redeemer's command, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,*" by seeking it last; and lays a foundation for bitter anguish, remorse and disappointment, in trusting, for the life of his soul, to what seldom or never happens. *John vii. 27. Luke x. 42. Matt. vi. 33. xxii. 5.* "*But they made light of it* (*viz. the gospel salvation*) *and went one to his farm, and another to his merchandise,*" as things of more consequence to them than the blessings of the gospel.

8. The hypocrite hopes for heaven with the indulgence of unmortified passions, and unbridled lusts, and while he is visibly under the influence of a proud, covetous, worldly, uncharitable, and unforgiving spirit; disliking to be ruled by the plain precepts of the gospel when they oppose and condemn his inclinations and pursuits; avoiding that light of truth which shews his disobedience and hypocrisy, and satisfying and pleasing himself with the hope, that there are multitudes of good christians in

the world, who are not altogether conformable to every command of Christ, and yet may be accepted and beloved of the Lord: thereby manifesting his ignorance of the word of God, and his enmity to it, as well as his love to allowed disobedience and iniquity. *Gal. v. 2. Rom. viii. 13. Matt. v. 48. 2 Pet. i. 14, 15. 1 John ii. 4. He that saith I know him (viz. Christ) and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, (an hypocrite) and the truth is not in him.*

9. The hypocrite hopes for heaven without zeal for God, delight in his service, love to his people, or concern for the prosperity of his kingdom and interest in the world; and without using the influence and talents the Lord has given him for those purposes; while he censuring and judging this spirit and conduct in those about him, as more than what is required, and the effects of a proud hypocritical spirit, or misinformed judgment, and will labour to misrepresent and oppose it, so far as his ability to do so extends. *Rev. iii. 19. Matt. vii. 1. 5. 1 John iii. 10. Luke xix. 12. 27. Mark xxiii. 13. Woe unto you, hypocrites, for ye neither go in to your selves (viz. to the kingdom of heaven) neither (would ye) suffer them that are entering to go in.*

10. The hypocrite professeth to hope for heaven thro' Christ, without possessing the knowledge of Christ, the love of Christ, or the Spirit of Christ; without a subjection to the will of Christ, and an imitation of the meek and lowly example of Christ; without also an acquaintance with the word and promises of Christ, and the preciousness and value of Christ; without an inclination to forsake all for Christ, and to trust all with him, from the assurance of his word that in so doing we shall find all in him, and enjoy all with him; and hopes for an impossibility. *John xvii. 3. Phil. iii. Matt. xvi. 24, 25. xix. 27, 28. xi. xi. 29. 1 Pet. 7. Be not deceived, the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

11. The hypocrite hopes for heaven in the way of perfect ignorance; and, while he pleads he is no scholar, foolishly imagines it is human learning that makes us christians, and that his allowed ignorance will excuse for him with the Lord for the want of more religion; whilst he takes little or no pains to improve the means the Lord hath given him to be made wise unto salvation, and will not believe that wilful blindness of mind in the things of God, and his soul, is the certain road to the world of eternal darkness beneath; is the sure sign of being under the dominion of the devil, the prince of darkness, and is that state of danger, misery, and condemnation, from which the Gospel, the light of heaven, is purposely sent to call us. *Cor. i. 18. 31. Matt. xi. 25. 2 Cor. ix. 3. 6. Luke i. 77. 79. John iii. 19. 21. Acts xxvi. 17, 18. My people perish for lack of knowledge.*

12. The hypocrite hopes for heaven without the repentance and faith of the Spirit of God, which regenerates for heaven; without the righteousness, peace, and joy of the kingdom of heaven, and without a disposition to covet these as his chief concern; without also that purity of heart, and poverty and humbleness of mind, to which the kingdom of heaven is promised.— He hopes for heaven also, with only a fleshly, carnal mind, that can cordially relish and delight in nothing but earthly and fleshly things; and is satisfied to live without a scriptural evidence of a title to heaven, and interest therein, and without the least requisite disposition for the enjoyment thereof, without fear of sin, love of holiness, and communion with Christ and his Saints; and so, with a hope that will miserably deceive him in the end. *John iii. 5. 31. Rom. xiv. 17. Matt. vi. 33. v. 8. 1 John iii. 3. Rom. v. 5. Job viii. 13. The hypocrite's hope shall perish. If ye live after the flesh ye shall die.*

13. Thus the hypocrite professes the religion of the Bible without possessing it; accounts himself a christ-

tian without the mind, and will, and conduct of Christ; calls God his father, without a dependance on his promise, and without the tempers of his children; without delight in his will, conformity to his image, and obedience to his commands; and hopes for his inheritance in heaven, while he prefers earth in his affections and choice before it, and while he lives in a slothful indifference about it. He worships God in the Church, but lives without him in the world, and honours him with his lips, without experiencing the influence of his presence, fear, and Spirit in his heart, and is afraid and ashamed to speak and act in strict conformity to his will and word, in his life. He owns the form and appearance of godliness in himself, but denies and opposes its power and effects, in others; and whilst he acknowledges a Saviour that has died for us, a God that will judge us, and a heaven or hell that will forever receive us, is as little actuated by them, and as much swallowed up with the profits and pleasures of the present world, as if he professed them not. *Rom. viii. 9. Matt. vi. 9. Mal. i. 6. 2 Tim. iii. 5. Matt. xv. 7, 8.*—*Hypocrites honour me with their lips but their heart is far from me, Tit. i. 16. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.—And now, Lord, what is my hope?*

ADDRESS.

DEAR Reader, do any of these hopes of the hypocrite belong to thee? Search and examine carefully. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, the hope of glory, except ye be reprobates? *2 Cor. xiii. 5. Col. i. 27.* The everlasting salvation of thy soul is all of consequence; and Satan will labour hard, by the powerful influence of the world and the flesh, to cheat thee of it. He has prospered in his attempts to deceive the unwary for many thousand years, and he will leave no method untried to divert thy mind from the one thing needful, and to conceal the danger of its neglect. Thou mayest have a multiplicity of cares and concerns to attend to, but if thy soul be not the chief care of all, they will murder it, and bury thee in everlasting darkness and despair. *2 Cor. vii. 10.* If thou have no heart-affecting knowledge of thy guilt, no painful sense of thy danger thereby, and no abiding concern to escape the wrath to come, and to possess the friendship and image of Christ, thou art the very hypocrite here described, with all thy supposed good thoughts, desires, purposes, and works. The word of God condemns thee, and the earnestness, anxiety and diligence of true christians about thee, to seek the kingdom of heaven, and to be found of Christ in peace, do the same: and however they may be censured and reproached for making more ado about the matter than is necessary, there is a Day coming that will convince all to the contrary; and that will make it appear, that it were impossible to be too much concerned to escape eternal torments, and possess eternal life. For then shall the righteous shine as the sun in that kingdom of their father they have earnestly coveted, and diligently sought and enquired after; while the neglectors, and consequently despisers thereof, cannot escape the damnation of Hell.

Matt. xi. 12. Heb. ii. 3. Hypocrisy in religion is to profess to be a christian without being one in truth; and to be one in truth is to possess and manifest the Spirit and Grace of Christ. In vain dost thou talk of a good heart, and good resolutions, and follow thy good deeds; the Lord allows nothing good we do or say, till we are united to the fountain of goodness, Jesus Christ, by a living and heaven-born faith; till we are *created in him* in this manner, *unto good works*. If thy soul be not quickened and made alive to God by his Spirit, and to the love of heart-purity, holiness, and obedience, and the whole will of God, thy goodness is partial, selfish and hypocritical, and leaves thee dead in trespasses and sin, an enemy to true godliness, and a stranger to the peace and hope, the love and joy it inspires. *Eph. ii. 1. 10.* The tree must be made good before its fruit can be good; and thy mind must be enlightened from above, and thy heart be purged from the love and dominion of fleshly things, as well as from all iniquity, before it can take delight in the holy will of God, or perform any thing acceptable in his sight. *Rom. vii. 18. Matt. xii. 33. 35.* Therefore the Great God calls for a new heart, that is, a clean heart, and a new spirit, which none of us have by nature, and without which thy sacrifices of prayers, worship, and alms, are but abomination in his sight. *Isa. i. 15, 16. Ezek. xviii. 31.* They are the effects of a nature which is *only evil*, and that continually, (*Gen. vi. 5.*) and of a heart that is deceitful, worldly, carnal, and so desperately wicked. *Jer. iv. 14.—xvii. 2.* With the deep conviction of this truth, and with thy earnest and diligent application to him, he has promised a new heart and a new spirit, and he will be as good as his word. *Ezek. xxxvi. 27.* Hence it is only negligent unbelief which destroys souls, and this it is which will ruin thine, if it be persisted in. *Matt. vii. 8. Rom. ii. 7.* Whether thou profess any religion or none; have any out-

ward duties to adorn thy character and give thee the advantage of thy neighbour, or none; whether, in short, thou be moral or immoral in thy external deportment, thy heart remains the same, carnal, earthly and corrupt, without the regenerating influence of the Spirit of Christ: incapable of pleasing God, or relishing the delights of his spiritual kingdom and service; and destitute of any purpose or wish to fulfil his pleasure and will, to promote his glory, or to further his interest: for where must it come from, with a nature only evil? These are the fruits of being *renewed* in the Spirit of our minds. (*Rom. viii. 5. 8. Eph. iv. 23.*) Such is the state to which the Lord, by his word, calls thee, and such is the frame of soul he is able to work in thee. (*Eph. ii. 10. Phil. iii. 13.*) Thou must be enlightened, pardoned, washed and renewed from above, or, as thy soul liveth, where the God of holiness and purity is thou canst never come. (*Matt. v. 8.*) Trifle therefore no longer with the concerns of thy immortal spirit. The Lord is perfectly willing to teach thee, if thou be only willing and desirous to learn. Shake off thy prejudices, and quit the devices and desires of thy own heart for the instructions of God's Spirit; and stand in the ways, and see, observe, and consider, and ask diligently and earnestly for the good old paths which God has marked out, and all his saints have trode, and walk therein; and thou shalt find such rest to thy soul, such peace in thy conscience, and such pleasure and joy in thy heart, as thou hast hitherto never know. Thy heaven will begin with thy readiness to hear and accept the will of God in every thing, and to be, and do what he commands. And tho' the gate be strait, and the way be narrow, (*Matt. vii. 14.*) and an obedience to his word be mortifying to the flesh, yet will it be its own reward, and beyond conception great and precious. And it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, than with the indulgence of evil tempers, inclinations,

and sensual appetites and passions, dear as the members of thy body, to be cast into hell, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched. Gospel commands, however hard they may be deemed, are easier than the torments of the damned, and it is infinitely better to suffer in the flesh now by a subjection to them, than to endure endless torment hereafter. Thou wilt feel them more than thy spirit can bear; for who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Know then, O fellow sinner, that now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Submit to Jesus, whilst you may, before he swear in his wrath, thou shalt never enter into his rest, as he has done with many. Surrender thyself to his grace, before thou be compelled to submit to his fearful indignation. He will be Lord, and if you accept not his rule and authority over thee, he will command thee to be bound hand and foot, and cast into eternal slavery, darkness and woe. He will reckon with thee for all thine iniquity, whether public or private, scandalous or decent, and a dreadful reckoning it will be. He graciously offers thee life and salvation upon thy willingness to be subject to him in all things. If this be hard, harder measures are yet behind; for he will be obeyed, or else he will punish. And surely the worst punishment is reserved for those who refuse his easy yoke, and despise his marvelous loving kindness and grace. He endured much, very much, to make a way for thy escape from hell, and open the kingdom of heaven, and did it with pleasure; and wilt thou reject his will because it may prove a little painful to the flesh at first? The Lord teach thee better. He waits to accommodate thee with eternal life. He knocks at the door of thy heart with this view. Wilt thou weary him out, and oblige him to depart, and give thee up for ever? Nay then, how dreadful will thy doom be. He has suffered what we never can while here to present us with the tenders of his salvation. It com-

him his blood to make satisfaction for our guilt, and so to open a way of life: wherefore he is able to save; and there is nothing wanting but thy willingness and earnest desires to be saved by him. The spirit and the bride, the church of saved and sanctified sinners, say come. All things are ready for thy gracious reception. Let then sin, and the flesh, and the world no longer persuade thee to refuse. He has waited long upon thee, and borne with thy manners in the wilderness for many years. O! exhaust not his patience; grieve his Spirit no more. Rise—he calleth thee yet, in the language of mercy and tenderness. He will not execute the fierceness of his wrath upon thy submission to him, but will blot out thine iniquity, and enrich thee with all the privileges and blessings of an heir of glory. If thou only so believe his word, as to be willing to be saved in his way, namely, from ignorance, corruption and every darling lust, from the world and the flesh, in their ensnaring profits and pleasures, as well as from hell, and accept the way of holiness and self-denial, as thy choice and pleasure, thou shalt eat the good of the land of promise, and see his face with joy; but if thou continue, thro' unbelief, to fight his salvation, and to walk in the ways of thine own heart, and in the sight of thine own eyes, thy damnation is certain and just, and will be the reward of thine own wilful disobedience; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. *Isa. i. 19, 20.*

The good Lord open thine understanding, and correct thy conscience of thy guilt and danger, lest, with all thy supposed goodness and shew of godliness, when thou art weighed in the balance thou be found wanting. Will thou want of a better righteousness than thine own, and thine hypocrisy procure thee the sentence of divine wrath; or then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Remember, and forget not, that this is the day of the divine forgiveness towards thee, and that the ax of vindictive

Justice is laid unto the root of the trees, in a continual readiness to execute the threatenings written; every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit, as well as every tree that bringeth forth evil fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. *Matt. iii. 10.* Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to escape these things, and to stand before the Son of Man (*Matt. xxi. 36.*) *For behold the Judge is at the door, and the Lord will presently require thy soul.*

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